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## DR. J. L. LANDAU'S "NACHMAN KROCHMAL."

*Nachman Krochmal, ein Hegelianer*, von Dr. J. L. LANDAU. (Berlin, N.W. 7, Verlag von S. Calvary und Co., 1904, pp. 69.)

IN one of his letters, Moses Mendelssohn writes that the zealots are not altogether wrong in maintaining that secular studies and enlightenment are sometimes injurious, but their dangerous fallacy consists in imagining that the progress of enlightenment may be arbitrarily stopped. The truth of this dictum may be abundantly illustrated, and in Nachman Krochmal we have an interesting example. With no slight self-sacrifice his poor mother paid annually the prescribed fine for not sending him to the secular schools, in order to save little Nachman's mind from the taint of worldly knowledge. Before many years had elapsed Nachman Krochmal, equally poor or even more so, made no less a sacrifice in becoming a subscriber for Hegel's philosophical works. In fact, he appears to have been the only private subscriber from the whole of Galicia. Scanning that subscription list the spirit of the age must have smiled a pensive smile! In the present pamphlet, the Rev. Dr. Landau, late of Manchester, now of Johannesburg, traces some of the consequences of Krochmal's purchase of Hegel's writings.

Nachman Krochmal was certainly one of the most remarkable personalities among the Jews of the nineteenth century. His services as the father of Jewish science have been, and are, universally acknowledged. And yet he is, in a sense, one of the most neglected, though undeservedly neglected, of Jewish thinkers. His ambitious work, *The New Guide for the Perplexed* (literally, *The Guide for the Perplexed of the Time*), was not published till more than a decade after his death. Though more than half a century has elapsed since it was first published it has only reached a second edition, and unhappily both editions have been printed in Lemberg, fully maintaining the unenviable reputation of that town as a place for spoiling books<sup>1</sup>. As yet the new but already aging *Guide* has

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Landau, however, charges the printers with a gratuitous blunder when he asserts (p. 13 n.) that *Neboche*, on the title-page, is wrong, and should be *Nebuche*. The one is as legitimate as the other, cf. Esther iii. 15 with Exod. xiv. 3. See Dr. Friedländer's note, vol. I, p. 7, of his translation of Maimonides' *Guide*. In Buxtorf's Latin translation the headings are given throughout as *More Nevochim*, with an o.

not been translated from the original Hebrew into any modern language. Nor, although Krochmal has had no little share in the training of some distinguished Hebraists, can one speak of a Krochmal literature in any language. As regards English readers, the only source of information accessible to them is Dr. Schechter's delightful essay in his *Studies in Judaism*. So there is room for more work in this direction. Dr. Landau reminds us that the majority of Hebrew readers are still at the standpoint to which Maimonides' *Guide* led them. Is not that also true in a measure of some modern seminaries, which never seem to get beyond the old answers to older questions, to the detriment of more living problems and books not yet antiquated?

Zunz, the friend of Krochmal, and editor of his *Guide*, has pointed out long ago that Krochmal relied on the philosophy of Hegel much in the same way as Maimonides relied on the philosophy of Aristotle. But, although almost every page of Krochmal's *Guide* has, according to Dr. Schechter, blossomed forth into an independent treatise, no one had hitherto paid any special regard to the exact relation in which Krochmal stood to Hegelian philosophy. And that is what Dr. Landau has set himself to determine as precisely as possible. The pamphlet before us treats of Hegel's influence on Krochmal's Philosophy of Religion and Logic. In the Introduction, Dr. Landau gives a succinct and interesting account of Krochmal's life and work. (Why, by the way, do Dr. Schechter and Dr. Landau go out of their way to throw cold water on Moses Mendelssohn, seeing that according to their own accounts Krochmal was such an admirer of the German Socrates?) In the first chapter he deals with Krochmal's "Philosophy of Religion," as contained in the *Guide*, chaps. I-IV, and cites corresponding passages from Hegel. As an appendix to this chapter there follow two notes on Cabbalistic parallels to certain Hegelian doctrines. In the second chapter Dr. Landau discusses Krochmal's "Logic," as contained in the *Guide*, chaps. XVI and XVII, furnishing parallel passages from Hegel. The works of Hegel which are quoted and referred to are the *Philosophy of Religion*, the *Logic*, and the *Phenomenology*.

In his Preface to Krochmal's *Guide*, Zunz states that he intentionally omitted some of Krochmal's references to various books. It is therefore quite possible that Krochmal himself indicated precisely his indebtedness to Hegel's works, and that but for Zunz's arbitrary omissions Dr. Landau's laborious comparison might have been obviated. But what has become of the manuscript of the *Guide*? Dr. Landau does not say anything about it. So we are probably meant to assume that it is lost. And, assuming the need for such

an inquiry, we may state at once that Dr. Landau has made out his case. There are many unmistakable traces of Hegelian thought in Krochmal's *Guide*. Dr. Landau is sure to strengthen his case yet more when he comes to treat of Krochmal's "Philosophy of History," as he promises to do shortly. For, in all probability, it was just in his attitude towards history that Hegel's influence was most real.

While admitting Dr. Landau's main contention, we owe it to Krochmal not to forget that his real significance does not depend on what he assimilated from Hegel. Hegelian modes of thought and expression were only more or less suitable aids and means to the evolution and representation of Krochmal's characteristic attitude to Jewish history and literature. His remarkable familiarity with Rabbinical literature, and his shrewd insight into its latent wealth—these were his real merits, and these were peculiarly his own. This truth seems obscured by Dr. Landau's mode of treatment, though unintentionally no doubt. Moreover, such merciless dissection of special passages from Krochmal's *Guide*, and such minute comparison with parallel expressions in Hegel, give the essay an appearance of fragmentariness which does not help to make it pleasant or easy reading. All this is largely inevitable, and it is not altogether fair to find fault with Dr. Landau on that account. We only mention it in order to make a suggestion. A correct edition of Krochmal's *Guide* is certainly desirable. One of the chief merits of Dr. Landau's essay is that it throws light on a number of corrupt or obscure passages in the extant editions of Krochmal's *Guide*. Most of Dr. Landau's material would be very serviceable as notes to a complete text. If Dr. Landau could see his way to undertake the task of re-editing Krochmal's *Guide*, with notes, &c., his work would be altogether more satisfactory both to himself and to his readers.

A. WOLF.

#### KARAITE FEASTS AND FASTS.

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*Die karaïdischen Fest- und Fasttage, von Samuel ben Moses ha-Ma'arabi.* Herausgegeben  
nach einer Berliner Handschrift. Inaugural-Dissertation . . .  
von JUDA JUNOWITSCH. (Berlin, 1904. 21 u. 35 SS. (Text)  
in 8°.)

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